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UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 03 ANKARA 008440

SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT FOR INR/R/MR, EUR/SE, EUR/PD, NEA/PD, DRL
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E.O. 12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: ANKARA MEDIA REACTION REPORT
TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 19, 2002

THIS REPORT WILL PRESENT A TURKISH PRESS SUMMARY UNDER THREE
THEMES:

HEADLINES
BRIEFING
EDITORIAL OPINION

HEADLINES

MASS APPEAL

Sezer adjustment - Milliyet
Chess game at the Presidential Palace - Sabah
Cabinet of Hope - Turkiye
Moderate and reasonable - Hurriyet
From historical rivalry to strategic partnership - Turkiye
EU delays expansion decision to ease time pressures in
Cyprus - Hurriyet
"Stay on the side" bribe from US to Turkey - Sabah

OPINION MAKERS

Sezer makes adjustments in the Cabinet list - Cumhuriyet
The cabinet formed through dialog - Radikal
Sezer requested adjustment on the Cabinet list - Zaman
The history changes in the Aegean - Yeni Safak
Simitis support to Erdogan for EU - Radikal
Simitis: Don't expect date for negotiations - Cumhuriyet
Greek Cypriots ready to discuss Cyprus plan - Cumhuriyet
UN inspectors are in Iraq after four years - Radikal

FINANCIAL JOURNALS

Markets respond positively to the new Cabinet - Dunya
IMF will love the emergency action plan - Finansal Forum

BRIEFING

New Government: All papers and TV channels cover extensively the formation of the new government. After the Prime Minister-designate Abdullah Gul presented the new government list to President Sezer, the President made some adjustments on the list, mainly on the key ministries such as education, defense and interior. Sezer's only rejection was of the proposed education minister Besir Atalay. Besir Atalay had been sacked from his post as Rector of Kirikkale University by the Higher Education Board for fundamentalism. The education ministry has been given to former ANAP deputy Erkan Mumcu. Initially, the number of the ministers in the new cabinet was expected to be 23 plus the Prime Minister. However, the number became 24 in the last minute when Vecdi Gonul was given a ministerial post after Bulent Arinc's demand for the Parliament Speaker post. Observers say that the new cabinet is moderate and reasonable. The list of new cabinet members is as follows:

Prime Minister : Abdullah Gul
Deputy PM: Abdullatif Sener
Deputy PM: Mehmet Ali Sahin
Deputy PM: Ertugrul Yalcinbayir
State Minister: Mehmet Aydin
State Minister: Besir Atalay
State Minister: Ali Babacan
State Minister: Kursat Tuzmen
Education: Erkan Mumcu
Interior: Abdulkadir Aksu
Foreign: Yasar Yakis
Justice: Cemil Cicek
Defense: Vecdi Gonul
Finance: Kemal Unakitan
Housing: Zeki Ergezen
Health: Recep Akdag
Transport: Binali Yildirim
Agriculture: Sami Guclu
Labor and Social Security: Murat Basesgioglu

Industry: Ali Coskun
Energy: Hilmi Guler
Culture: Huseyin Celik
Tourism: Guldal Aksit
Forestry: Osman Pepe
Environment: Imdat Sutluoglu

Erdogan in Athens, Madrid: All papers front a warm welcome given to AKP leader Erdogan in Athens as he continues the EU lobbying for Turkey. Erdogan's statement in Athens about the AKP's desire to solve the Cyprus issue and readiness to negotiate the UN's Cyprus peace plan are the major highlights in Turkish reports. Papers also noted that Prime Minister Simitis pledged Greek support for Turkey's EU membership while advising Erdogan to only expect a 'date for setting a negotiation date', not a negotiating date, for Turkey during the upcoming Copenhagen summit. A large number of columnists as travelling press for the Erdogan visit emphasize that Erdogan and Simitis had a long tete-a-tete meeting without participation of both sides' Foreign Ministry delegations. Reports note that following a delegation to delegation meeting in Madrid, Erdogan is expected to visit EU headquarters in Brussels.

Cyprus: Papers welcome the EU Commission's announcement to defer the implementation of the enlargement plan until May 1, 2003. Although Brussels announcement cites 'due to budgetary reasons,' Turkish papers and television reports attribute this decision to the Cyprus issue and the UN peace plan in particular. The overall approach is the interpretation of EU's delay as 'we are deferring our decision so that you can reach a settlement on Cyprus.' Reports note that the new government is to take an initiative on the Cyprus issue and might declare its official position on the Cyprus plan once the cabinet starts functioning. The Turkish Cypriot leader Denktas is quoted as saying 'they need some time to evaluate and come up with a final decision'. The Greek Cypriot side has already committed itself to negotiate the UN plan, and so will the Turkish Cypriot side, the reports surmise.

Iraq: Foreign affairs pages focus on the arrival of UN arms inspectors in Baghdad. Apart from Hans Blix's remarks, the reports also note that formal inspection is to start November 27 and the first results of the inspection to be reported to the UN on January 27, 2003. International news pages also highlight a NY Times story which talks about Washington's plan to comfort Turkey and Israel's worries. Apart from an extensive aid package for Turkey, the Pentagon also plans to station US soldiers to the oil-rich region of Kirkuk in order to prevent any attempts by locals to establish a separate Kurdish state.

EDITORIAL OPINION:
New Turkish Government/U.S.-Turkey/Cyprus

"No government has ever been as lucky as the AKP"
Mehmet Ali Birand noted the foreign support in mass appeal/sensational Posta (11/19): "One of the facts which make the AKP government a very lucky one is that it comes with US support. Due to the Iraq issue, AKP has received instant support from Washington. Thus its religious tendencies have not even been questioned. . On the Cyprus issue, the AKP is lucky as well. After years of great efforts by Denktas and by the Turkish Foreign Ministry bureaucrats, we have reached the current stage that calls for a final step to be taken. That requires courage. Yet the current stage comes along with a very lucky climate as well. If the Turkish side manages to achieve what it wants in Cyprus, Turkey's horizon will be cleared incredibly."

"Dream Might Come True in Cyprus"
Editor-in-Chief Mehmet Y. Yilmaz wrote in mass appeal Milliyet (11/19): "Turkish people want to see a settlement in Cyprus. Turkish people want to see Turkey in the EU. And as for the Turkish Cypriots, they do not want to be left out while the Greek Cypriots join the European Union. . This common desire calls Denktas to evaluate the UN plan very seriously. An experienced leader like Denktas has the ability to perform a diplomatic juggling act and he is capable of correcting some mistakes in the plan at the negotiation table. If Denktas believes he does not want to discuss this plan at the negotiation table, then I think, he should retire."